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FROM FIELD AND STUDY

A Yellow Phase of the Cassin Purple Finch.—Although Linnets (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) are well known to show variable amounts of yellow, this color has not been detected, so far as I am aware, in other members of the genus. An adult male Cassin Finch (*Carpodacus cassinii*) taken by the writer near Sierra City, Sierra County, California, July 17, 1916, has the normally red areas entirely replaced by lemon yellow. It is now in the collection of Mr. A. B. Howell.—A. J. VAN ROSSEM, *Los Angeles, California, March 25, 1921.*

Black-and-White Warbler Again in Southern California.—On April 20, 1921, I observed a male Black-and-White Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*) in full song in a plane tree in a stream bed in Carpinteria, Santa Barbara County. This is, I believe, the sixth known occurrence of the species in California (see Pac. Coast Avifauna, no. 11, p. 144, and Condor, xxii, p. 76). The bird noted above was within a mile of the spot where Dr. Henderson saw the bird noted by him (*loc. cit.*).—RALPH HOFFMANN, *Carpinteria, California, April 23, 1921.*

Notes on Some Birds of the Berkeley Campus.—From 1883 to 1889 I was actively engaged in collecting birds at Berkeley, California, and for several years made regular notes on bird migration. Some of these notes appeared in Belding's "Land Birds of the Pacific District", issued by the California Academy of Sciences in 1890, but many of them have never been published. Those on early arrivals or late departures are still interesting in comparison with subsequent observations or in averaging dates of arrival of certain species during a term of years.

Examination of the records in Grinnell's "Second List of the Birds of the Berkeley Campus" (Condor, xvi, 1914, pp. 28-40), indicates that several entries among my notes may be of interest. While my earliest or latest dates have probably now been superseded they may still be worth recording as they refer to years for which there are comparatively few published notes.

Larus philadelphia. Bonaparte Gull. A male bird of this species was "found nearly dead" on the University grounds April 21, 1888, and was presented to me by Mr. J. J. Rivers, then curator of the University Museum. The specimen was duly made up and was preserved in my collection in the California Academy of Sciences which was destroyed in the San Francisco fire of 1906.

Stellula calliope. Calliope Hummingbird. The statement in Belding's "Land Birds", p. 89, that the Calliope Hummingbird is a "rare accidental visitant" at Berkeley was based on a single specimen collected on the hill, just east of the grove where the Greek Theater now stands, in the early fall of 1884 or 1885. Frank H. Holmes, Hubert F. Burgess and I were collecting together at the time, and the bird was shot by Holmes or Burgess. So far as I am aware it was the only specimen obtained in Berkeley during the years that I collected there.

Passerina amoena. Lazuli Bunting. The earliest date of arrival according to my notes is April 18, 1888, which is six days earlier than that mentioned in Grinnell's "List".

Dendroica auduboni. Audubon Warbler. My earliest dates of arrival in the autumn seem to be October 8, 1887, and October 2, 1888, and the latest date on which the bird was observed in spring April 15, 1887—all of which have now been superseded.

Anthus rubescens. Pipit. The earliest date of arrival that I have for the Pipit in autumn is September 28, 1887, which is several days earlier than the dates given by Grinnell.

Salpinctes obsoletus obsoletus. Rock Wren. Not included in Grinnell's list. Although I can not now give any specific dates, I frequently found the Rock Wren, especially in autumn and winter, on the hills east of the Greek Theatre and on the north side of Strawberry Canyon.

Sitta canadensis. Red-breasted Nuthatch. My latest spring record is March 27, 1888, while the latest mentioned by Grinnell is March 24, 1913.

Hylocichla guttata nanus. Dwarf Hermit Thrush. Early fall records include

October 12, 1885, and October 11 and 13, 1888, but subsequent observers have noted the arrival of the bird as early as October 4, in 1912 and 1913.—T. S. PALMER, *Washington, D. C., May 8, 1921.*

Extension of Breeding Range of Marsh Sparrow and Monterey Hermit Thrush*.—

While carrying on some field work for the California Academy of Sciences in Del Norte County, California, during this past spring (1921), with Chase Littlejohn as assistant, I kept special lookout for marsh sparrows (*Passerculus sandwichensis* subsp.?), as there did not seem to be any good reason for this species limiting its northern range to Humboldt Bay. While it is true that there are but few attractive localities for it along this rockbound coast, at the same time a few small meadows do exist at the mouths of rivers and at the heads of lagoons. One such meadow is at the mouth of the Klamath River, just opposite the little settlement of Requa, Del Norte County, this being an alluvial flat about a mile long and half a mile wide. It is shut off from the ocean by a bar of low sand dunes, and seemed as if it might be a breeding ground for this sparrow, which it proved to be.

A visit to this flat on May 7 resulted in our finding a small number of these birds there, and two males were secured. On May 16 another visit was made to this place and a search carried on for nests, of which none was found. Several birds were seen and another male taken. They were found only at the ocean end of the flat, in land that is more or less of a meadow and has a small stream running through it that is backed up by the tides. Most of the drier parts of the flat are covered with scattered bushes of lupine, and it was perching upon these that the birds were most often seen.

On May 29 another visit was made to this meadow and two or three of the birds were again seen. As we could not find a nest we endeavored to obtain a female, for examination as to breeding status. A pair was finally located, but the female was lost in a thick growth of lupine and grass, most unfortunately. Not wishing to run the chance of exterminating this small colony no further attempt was made to obtain a bird. There can be no doubt, however, as to this species breeding there, to judge from the actions of those seen. A number of dairy cattle daily grazing in this meadow not only kept the grass very short, where unprotected by lupine bushes, but also made the search for nests more difficult by continually getting in our way, or stirring up the birds as they moved about. There was so little grass for concealment in the open that it seems probable that the nests were either in the lupines, or else at the edge of the sand dunes where small drift wood would protect them. As much time as could be spared was devoted to searching for nests, but without result.

Passing through Crescent City, Del Norte County, on a trip into the interior, some good-looking meadow was noted and, upon returning to that town, the morning of May 27 was devoted to settling the question as to the presence there of the marsh sparrow. In a small damp spot just south of the town a pair of this species was located and again a male was taken. The female escaped and disappeared for the moment. A long tramp failed to discover any more, nor did a visit by Littlejohn to another meadow meet with success. This may have been due to the constantly increasing gale that sprang up early that morning and finally drove us indoors for the rest of the day. We arranged to get out at five o'clock next morning for a further search, but a heavy rain set in, with the promise of such bad weather that it was decided to return to Requa, our principal objective, and finish up the work there.

The original idea in looking for marsh sparrows on this field trip was the possibility of finding the Bryant Marsh Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis bryanti*) breeding farther north along the coast than Humboldt Bay. The first bird taken at Requa appeared to prove such a possibility to be a fact, but upon careful study of the other four specimens secured I have concluded to place them all in the category of Dwarf Marsh Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis brooksi* Bishop), not so much on account of measurements as compared with the Bryant Marsh Sparrow, but rather on account of the coloration. As remarked above, the first one obtained is indistinguishable from many specimens of *bryanti* taken in the breeding season in the recognized habitat of the latter form, while the other four of our Del Norte County specimens have the backs

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appreciably paler in coloration than those of almost any *bryanti* that I have examined and, although the individual measurements of the wings and tarsi are easily within the limits of the latter subspecies, the bills average smaller.

In addition to the above species I would like to record the taking of the Monterey Hermit Thrush (*Hylocichla guttata slevini*) at Myers' Ranch, Humboldt County, California, on June 5, 1921. On this occasion several individuals were seen, one of these, at least, gathering food for its young, and others were heard, in the woods just back of the ranch house. Two specimens were secured for more positive identification, although the song alone, to one familiar with it, is sufficient proof of the presence of this species.—JOSEPH MAILLIARD, *San Francisco, California, June 18, 1921.*

The "Pasadena" Thrasher Not a Recognizable Race.—I now believe Dr. Harry C. Oberholser was absolutely right in his contention that *Toxostoma redivivum pasadenense* is synonymous with *T. r. redivivum* (see Auk, xxxv, 1918, p. 52 *et seq.*). The type locality of *redivivum* was Monterey or near vicinity. When I named *pasadenense* (Auk, xv, 1898, p. 236) I assumed that birds from Monterey would be identical with the northern race, whereas, as first established by Dr. Oberholser on the basis of material in the United States National Museum, they prove to be like those from southern California. The Museum of Vertebrate Zoology has recently acquired a considerable number of thrashers representing a series of localities in Monterey County from Seaside southward; and all of these fall with the southern race, thus corroborating Oberholser's findings. Specimens from Santa Cruz, just north of Monterey Bay, are, according to Oberholser, referable to the northern form, *T. r. sonomae*, as are representatives from many localities in the counties bordering on San Francisco Bay. Here is a case where the type locality of a species happens to lie very nearly on the boundary line between the ranges of two constituent subspecies, and the correct allocation of the name first proposed depends upon the exact determination of topotypical specimens. Shifting of the supposed location of the belt of intergradation a few miles to the northward has necessitated transposition of names, and *pasadenense* is no longer to be recognized—save as a synonym of *redivivum*.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, June 25, 1921.*

Cassin Purple Finches Eating Salt.—While at Chinquapin, Yosemite National Park, on June 8, 1921, I observed four Cassin Purple Finches (*Carpodacus cassini*) eating rock salt that had been spread upon the ground for the deer. When I commented on this feeding to the ranger stationed there, he said that for some time birds had been coming to the salt patches regularly.—JUNEA W. KELLY, *Alameda, California, June 16, 1921.*

The Buffle-head Breeding in California.—The writer has been unable to locate any published record of the Buffle-head (*Charitonetta albeola*) breeding within the State of California. For this reason the following observations are here reported. On June 22, 1921, while engaged in fur-bearing mammal investigations at Eagle Lake, Lassen County, the writer, when looking for muskrats in a tule patch, came suddenly upon a female Buffle-head that was accompanied by two young about one-third grown. The small size, chunky build, plain grayish brown back, long white patch on each side of the head behind and below the level of the eye, together with a small white patch, crossed by a narrow black bar, on the wing, all identified with certainty the old bird as a female Buffle-head. The young were darker than their mother but had a conspicuous white patch on each cheek. Two days later, at the same locality, another female, accompanied by eight half-grown young, was seen. Two other females flew by our boat making a total of four adult females and ten young noted in three days. Every duck seen was closely scrutinized with the binoculars, but not one adult male Buffle-head could we detect. From the above it seems likely that the Buffle-head Duck bred in some numbers this season at Eagle Lake.—JOSEPH DIXON, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, June 27, 1921.*

Food of Western House Wrens.—The microscopic dissections of birds in the field, tabulated by Lee R. Dice and published in the May CONDOR, makes a person who takes most of his 4:30 A. M. observations from a downy couch on the sleeping porch feel that he is using a very lazy method. A strong resolution to profit by the example which Mr. Dice has set, resulted in the following table compiled by the writer from observations made between 10:20 and 11:20 A. M., June 15, 1921. The subjects were a family of eight nestling Western House Wrens (*Troglodytes aedon parkmani*) which were being fed by parents so tame that they could be watched from a distance of six feet. This made it possible to identify with a fair degree of accuracy the items on the bill of fare.

Everything offered was apparently devoured with alacrity except one gray and yellow beetle of considerable size, which one of the parents left inside of the box, but removed after a moment's interval. This is not included in the list.

Table of food eaten by 8 nestling Western House Wrens; Berkeley, California, June 15, 1921; 10:20 to 11:20 A. M.; temperature, 65°; wind, west.

| Kind of food | Average per bird | Total number |
|--|-------------------|--------------|
| Lady-bug | .625 | 5 |
| Crane-fly | .5 | 4 |
| Beetles (large) | .625 | 5 |
| Beetles (small) | .5 | 4 |
| Wire-fly | .25 | 2 |
| Lace-wings | .125 | 1 |
| Leaf-hopper | .125 | 1 |
| Cricket | .625 | 5 |
| Grasshopper | .125 | 1 |
| Butterfly | .125 | 1 |
| Moth | .125 | 1 |
| Milliped | .125 | 1 |
| Grub | .125 | 1 |
| Unknown | .125 | 1 |
| Total number of feedings | | 33 |
| Average amount per bird | | 4.125 |
| Average time between feedings | 1 min. 49.08 sec. | |
| Average time per bird between feedings | 14 min. 32.7 sec. | |
| Number of kinds of food | | 14 |
| Number of feedings per parent per hour | | 16.5 |
| Average time consumed in finding food | 3 min. 38 sec. | |
| Number of excreta removed | | 6 |

—AMELIA S. ALLEN, Berkeley, California, June 30, 1921.

Vermilion Flycatcher in Western San Bernardino County, in Summer.—On June 28, 1921, I found a pair of Vermilion Flycatchers (*Pyrocephalus rubinus mexicana*) at the Cushenbury Ranch at the base of the east slope of the San Bernardino Range, in San Bernardino County, California. Although I did not find a nest, I have no doubt that the birds were breeding as they were both busy about a fork high up in a cottonwood and the male was constantly indulging in his flight song.—RALPH HOFFMANN, Carpinteria, California, July 16, 1921.

Gray Gyr Falcon (*Falco rusticolus rusticolus*) in Stevens County, Washington.—During a recent visit to Colville, Stevens County, Washington, I saw a fine mounted female of this species in the taxidermist shop operated by Mr. L. Loew. The specimen was shot on February 10, 1917, by a farmer living at Echo about ten miles north of Colville. The bird is mounted with spread wings and is in fine winter plumage. Mr. Loew informs me that this is the only record of the species that has come to his attention during the many years he has been in the taxidermist business in Washington.—STANLEY G. JEWETT, Portland, Oregon, June 11, 1921.

Cassin Kingbird in Montana.—Marcus A. Hanna, while engaged in field investigations in central Montana, in August, 1918, obtained specimens of the Cassin Kingbird

(*Tyrannus vociferans*), a species apparently hitherto undetected in the State. In the course of his work Mr. Hanna camped for a few days in the Bull Mountains, about 16 miles to the southward of Roundup, Musselshell County. The principal forest covering of these hills consists of groves of yellow pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), which cover much of the higher ground and extend northward to the valley of the Musselshell. Among these pines the birds were found in small groups—three individuals on August 5, two on August 6, and four on August 7. They flew from one clump of pines to another, stopping only on the tallest trees, and there only for a short time. Three specimens were collected—two adult males on August 5, and a young bird on August 6. The last was still in juvenal plumage, and manifestly so recently from the nest as to make it practically certain that it was raised in the vicinity. These specimens are now in the Biological Survey collection.—EDWARD A. PREBLE, *Washington, D. C., July 5, 1921.*

A New Bird for Larimer County, Colorado.—About May 10, 1921, a Mexican boy captured alive a barn owl (*Aluco pratincola*) near Laporte, five miles west of Fort Collins. This owl is now in a cage in a local garage.—W. L. BURNETT, *State Agricultural College, Fort Collins, Colorado, June 10, 1921.*

Flocking Habits of the California Valley Quail.—The following observations were made between December 1, 1919, and May 1, 1920, on a farm which is located near Ripon, California, and about a mile from the Stanislaus River. The farm consists mainly of orchard, the trees being of three varieties, almond, cherries and peaches. A large brush pile was located at one edge of the orchard, about thirty yards from the dwelling house. The first time I noticed the particular flock of Valley Quail (*Lophortyx californicus vallicola*) in question was one morning about ten o'clock when I saw twenty-three birds making their way through the orchard to this brush pile. I found that this action was of regular occurrence with the flock and each morning, some time between the hours of nine and eleven, the flock gradually wended its way towards this protection. My first thought was that in addition to their using it as a place of refuge during the day, the birds roosted in the brush pile at night.

But upon further observation I found that the birds, instead of roosting in the brush pile, merely collected there during the day time for shelter when not searching for food. The "come-right-here" call was often sounded by one member of the flock which was posted some distance above ground for wide observation, though usually hidden in the brush. If a person approached, the bird would utter a call of alarm and disappear into the brush. The brush pile was of considerable size and though I tried to frighten the birds by beating the brush with sticks they merely retreated farther into the middle for protection.

Later observations showed that the birds roosted in some eucalyptus trees about two hundred yards from the brush pile. Each evening at dusk the flock came through the orchard toward the eucalyptus trees usually from a given direction along the bank of an irrigation ditch. As these trees were located in the stable yard the birds usually fed near the barn for some ten or fifteen minutes before flying to their roosting place. It was interesting to note that, usually, only one bird was in flight to the trees at a time, though once stimulated to flight by the leader, the whole flock was lost among the leaves in a remarkably short time. If a part of the flock was disturbed after the flight had begun, the remainder, instead of flying straight to roost, would fly out into the orchard for a time. This was probably a protective measure to lead one off the trail.

At dawn the flock would fly from the trees and proceed into the orchard for food. I wondered if the birds had a definite route of travel, but was unable to follow this out if such were the case. They traversed different parts of the orchard on different days. After foraging in the orchard and adjoining fields they would return to the brush pile for the middle part of the day. The direction from which they came to the brush pile varied on different days. They again returned to the orchard for a feeding trip in the afternoon after which they proceeded to the gum trees to roost.

Their modes of progress while in the field were interesting. At times I was led to think that a certain member of the flock was always followed as leader, while at other times there seemed to be no definite order, the one taking the lead which did not lag behind to feed. The flock, however, usually presented a definite "V" shape, the apex

being in the direction in which the flock was progressing. Certain of the birds were always on the alert more than others and when approached would utter a soft chucking sound which has been described as "*whit, whit, whit*". I have seen, on a few occasions, birds posted in orchard trees near where the flock was feeding. While they were usually engaged in preening their plumage they were probably sentinels on guard for they were the first to utter the cry of alarm when approached.

Early in April the large flock of birds began to decrease in size and instead of there being twenty-three birds in the flock there were at first two flocks of smaller size and later in the month I failed to find more than seven birds together at any one time. Also, instead of using the same brush pile as a place of refuge, two other brush piles at the opposite side of the orchard were appropriated by a part of the flock.

My observations were brought to a close the first of May and while no nests had been made as yet, it was probable that the flocks further subdivided into pairs or groups of threes for nesting purposes. The assemblage of the birds in large flocks after the nesting season will make an interesting study. Do the birds from each individual nest remain together and constitute a flock till the next breeding season, or do several families unite in the autumn?—JOHN F. KESSEL, *Berkeley, California, June 18, 1921.*

The Doves of Imperial County, California.—The intention of the observations recorded in this article was to determine the extent of the breeding season of the doves nesting in Imperial County. Of the three species nesting in this immediate locality (Brawley) two, the Western Mourning Dove (*Zenaidura macroura marginella*) and the Mexican Ground Dove (*Chaemepelia passerina palleescens*) are residents. The third, the Western White-winged Dove (*Melopelia asiatica mearnsi*) is migratory.

A nest of the White-winged Dove was found May 24, 1921, about a mile from my ranch, containing two full-grown young.

The Mourning Dove furnished the following data in 1920:

| | |
|---------------|----------------------------------|
| January 18, | 1 nest containing 2 eggs |
| February 7, | 3 nests containing 2 eggs |
| May 10, | 10 nests contained eggs or young |
| June 22, | 16 nests contained eggs or young |
| July 17, | 7 nests contained eggs or young |
| August 12, | 5 nests contained eggs or young |
| September 23, | 1 nest contained eggs or young |

The Ground Dove furnished the following data:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| January 22, | 1 nest containing 2 full grown young |
| February 14, | same nest containing 2 eggs |
| April 10, | 1 nest containing 2 eggs |
| May 5, | 1 nest containing 2 eggs |
| June 2, | 2 nests containing 2 eggs |
| August 12, | 1 nest containing 2 eggs |
| September 23, | 1 nest containing 2 eggs |
| November 7, | an old dove seen feeding half-grown young |

The Mexican Ground Dove appears to be partial to old nests, using its own or that of a Mourning Dove generally; but I have seen a pair trying a Sonora Red-winged Blackbird's nest; and during 1921 a pair has used an old Abert Towhee's nest for three broods, beginning to sit January 30, on the first eggs, and June 21, on the third set. I have never seen more than five of these doves about at one time. The area covered contains about one acre, the farm residence and 83 trees, mostly eucalyptus and a few pepper-trees.—JOHN C. FORTINER, *Brawley, California, July 1, 1921.*

A Specimen of the Black Swift from San Diego County, California.—With one exception, all of the published records of the occurrence of the Black Swift (*Cypseloides niger borealis*) in southern California, which have come to the writer's notice, have been based on "sight" records. The securing of a specimen by J. B. Dixon, 4 miles north of Escondido, San Diego County, California, on June 5, 1921, is therefore of interest. This bird was picked up under a telephone wire. It had met death by flying into the wire as

was revealed by the bruised body when the bird was skinned. The specimen was immediately forwarded to Berkeley where it was made into a study skin and now constitutes no. 41912 in the bird department of the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. The sex organs were so decomposed by the time the bird was skinned that it is not possible to state with absolute certainty the sex or breeding condition. The bird had the speckled plumage and square tail which usually characterize the female of this swift. There was nothing to indicate that it had bred recently or was about to breed. In the flesh, the specimen measured: length, $6\frac{1}{4}$ inches; spread, $15\frac{1}{4}$ inches. The bird was poor, weighing but 27 grams, whereas fat females average about 47 grams.—JOSEPH DIXON, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, July 1, 1921.*

The Bryant Cactus Wren Not a Bird of California.—I had opportunity recently to examine the Cactus Wrens in the A. W. Anthony collection of birds now owned by the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh. The type of *Heleodytes brunneicapillus bryanti* (orig. no. 3879, coll. A. W. Anthony, now no. 17789, Carnegie Mus., San Telmo, Lower Calif., April 30, 1893) is in badly worn and stained breeding plumage; but the race is represented further by a good series and is a perfectly valid one, with characters as given by Anthony (Auk, XI, 1894, p. 212). However, the range of *bryanti* does not reach north in Lower California anywhere nearly as far as the International Boundary; specimens from San Diego County, California, which have been labelled "*bryanti*" prove to exhibit only a slight tendency in that direction, being much nearer *H. b. couesi*. Those individuals showing nearly or quite complete white-barring of the tail do not show the other diagnostic features of *bryanti*, namely very heavy spotting below and dark upper surface. The name *bryanti* must therefore be expunged from the California list of birds, and the name *couesi* used for all the Cactus Wrens occurring within the state.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, June 24, 1921.*

Birds Observed in a Redwood Grove.—I was pleasantly surprised at the number of birds I heard and saw while spending a few hours in the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees, near Wawona, Mariposa County, California. The first birds to greet me were a pair of Northern Pileated Woodpeckers, fit denizens of such a magnificent forest. They were busily engaged in chipping off large pieces of wood from a dead log, presumably looking for insects, and admitted of close approach.

Next in line came a male Western Tanager, perching on a lichen-covered stump and catching his noon meal of insects. Blue-fronted Jays and Robins were everywhere. Sierra Creepers looked exceptionally small as they were running up the huge tree trunks. From every direction came the songs of the Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Mountain Chickadees and Red-breasted Nuthatches. Occasionally an Audubon Warbler could be seen; and a Modoc Hairy Woodpecker came quite close in his quest for food.

What impressed me was not so much the variety of birds encountered, but rather the number of individuals heard and seen.—JUNEA W. KELLY, *Alameda, California, June 16, 1921.*

Field Notes from Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, California.—*Mareca americana*. A pair seen June 25, 1921, in a tule-bordered lagoon near the mouth of the Santa Clara River, Ventura County.

Marila valisineria. A male seen June 25, in the same lagoon, perhaps a wounded bird.

Sayornis sayus. Nesting in a barranca just off the Coast Highway three miles west of Ventura. On June 24 the parents were feeding young on insects which they caught on the beach about an eighth of a mile away.

Molothrus ater obscurus. Frequent in willows and about a stock-pen near the mouth of the Santa Clara River, Ventura County. One egg found in a nest of the Long-tailed Chat. A few seen repeatedly at the mouth of the Ventura River, and a male observed on July 15 at Carpinteria, Santa Barbara County.

Ammodramus savannarum binaculatus. Frequent on June 25 along the dry, gravelly flood-plain of the Santa Clara River, Ventura County, near its mouth.—RALPH HOFFMANN, *Carpinteria, California, July 16, 1921.*